WHIRRAKEE

May 2000 Vol. 21 No. 4

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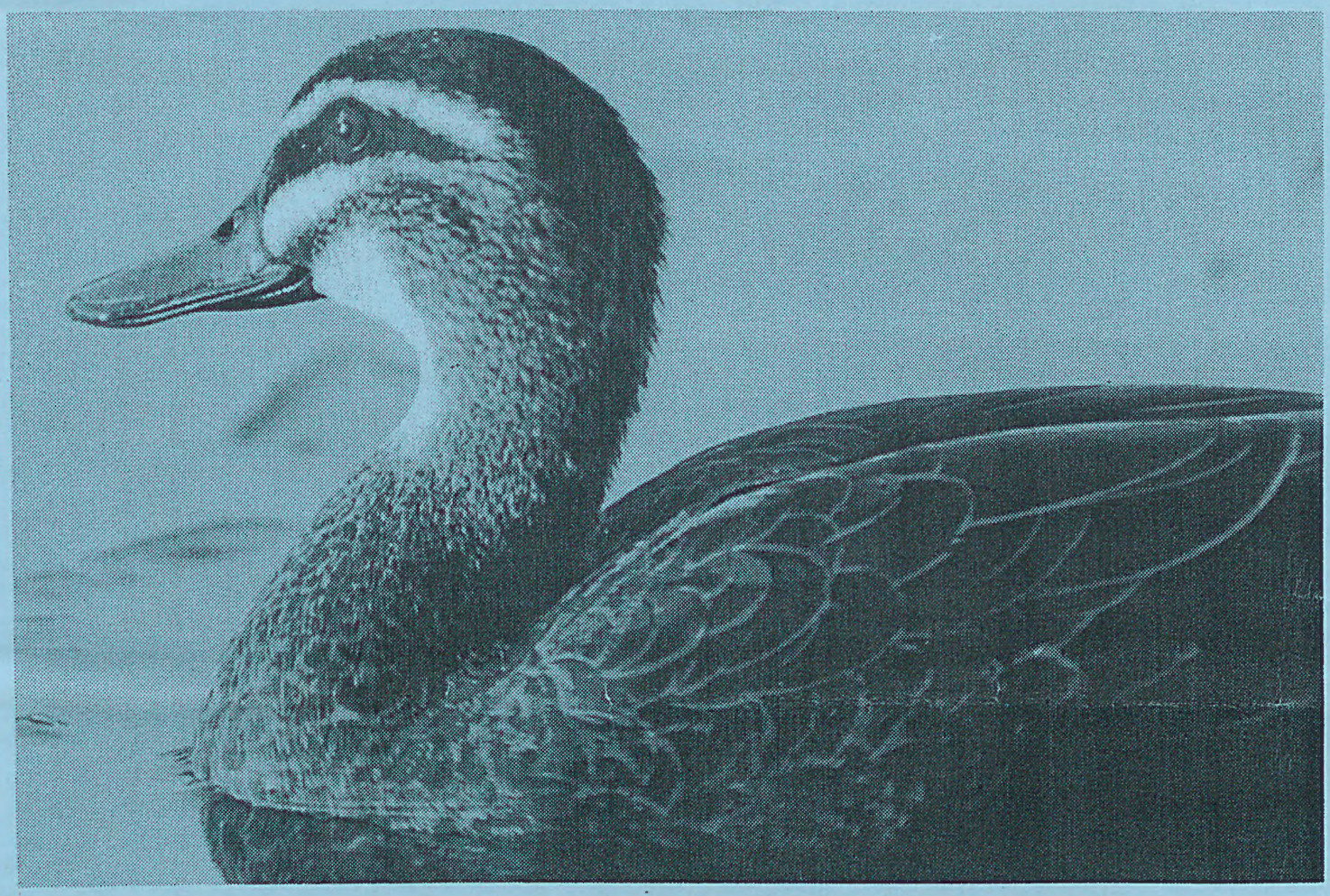

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552

Office Bearers for 1999 - 2000

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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $30; Family $35; Concession: Single $25; Family $30. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $30.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. Meetings start at 7:30pm and conclude with supper. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearers listed above, together with the following members: J. Cleary, D Collier; W N Holsworth; M Lewis; K Lottkowitz; R Moors; S Pelczinski; M Stone.

Excursions The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. Full-day excursions normally commence at 10am (usually on a Sunday); half-day excursions normally commence at 2pm and may be either on a Saturday or Sunday. Full-day or half-day excursions are usually held on the weekend following the General Meeting. Campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has 2 active sub-groups:

Bird Observers Group: meets on the first Friday of the month, at 7:30pm. The venue for meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

President: Anne Bridley
Secretary: Jane Cleary

Mammal Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Guley, 39 Cootamundra Place, Junortoun (5449 3479)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
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Vice Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)

Front Cover: Photographer: Ian Flecknoe-Brown

According to Graham Pizzey, the Black Duck, *Anas superciliosa*, might be Australia's most abundant waterfowl. Is that the reason why it was so difficult to find interesting information about this beautiful duck? Please sent interesting information in if you have any! However, there is one characteristic... is seems to be very promiscuous, breeding anywhere, anytime with any other duck (well, almost). It breeds with the mallard duck and perhaps a few other closely related ones.....continued on page 11

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 21, No. 4, May 2000

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's Note
A special note of thanks must go to Tom Patullo this time. His article really shows his spirit and my admiration for him doubled after reading it. If Tom or anybody else needs certain materials for growing orchids or other field-natty type activities but has trouble obtaining them, it might be an idea to advertise this in the Whirrakee. It would be a great shame if Tom would have to stop growing orchids for lack of gravel.....
Please note the change in the speaker program for May and June.

Vale – Lorna Ruedin

Lorna Ruedin was born at Huntly on March 24, 1917. Following her school years, Lorna joined with other members of the Tucker family in running their store, a landmark on the Northern Highway for many years.
Never one to sit back on watch things happen, Lorna was involved in the Girl Guides Movement where she became a guide leader.
Besides teaching Sunday School at St Clement's Church of England, Huntly, Lorna played the organ for the three services each Sunday.
In 1943, Lorna married Leon Ruedin and so began a long and endearing association with the Whipstick, where for the next seven years they lived besides their eucalyptus oil extraction distillery.
About 1950, they moved to Huntly where sons Leon Jr, Philip and Noel were raised.
Lorna and Leon diversified into egg production and raising cattle, but continued operating the oil extraction plant with mechanical harvesting replacing the labour intensive hand cutting of leaves.
The Ruedins' in-depth knowledge of the Whipstick was appreciated by Bendigo Field Naturalists Club members, when Leon and Lorna became members of this club in 1966.
Those fortunate enough to share bushland walks with Lorna had a great respect for her ability to spy out orchids and rare plants.
Life membership was conferred on Lorna and Leon in 1983.
Two extensive trips were made to W.A., studying and enjoying native wildflowers that were so much an enjoyable part of their lives.
Following Leon's death in 1986, Lorna continued to reside in Huntly until she failed to respond satisfactorily following a hip replacement in 1995.
Being in need of a high level of nursing care, Lorna moved to Lumeah Nursing Home in Echuca, where she passed away aged 83 years on March 27th.
Well known for her friendliness, sincerity and willingness to work, Lorna will long be remembered by all who knew her.
Our sympathy is extended to Leon, Philip, Noel and families.

Rob Watkins

From the land of the bare cupboard
Author: Tom Patullo

In fact, I was just about to write a letter to our editor to say that as far as a letter for the next edition of *Whirrakee* was concerned I was sorry that I had to say that my cupboard was bare.
But then I went to the shade house to see how this year's crop of young *Pterostylys* orchids were coming along. While gazing at these young basal leaves, I suddenly thought that surely there is a story there, and so, here we go.

Let me say for a start, that although this is a story of orchids, it is not in the land of those beautiful cymbidiums, but rather of the dainty, quaint little genera that frequent our own local bushland and can with a little attention and much tender loving care be grown in simple shade houses or similar places.

The main ingredients for successful cultivation of those quaint little gems is of course the correct growing mixture, known as the basic mix among those grow these little orchids.
This is not intended as an instruction on how to grow them but rather a tale of the success and failures I have had along the way and different mixtures of methods I have had of necessity had to try.
The hard and fast rule as laid down in the book had to be deviated from at times and many other trials have proved successful.

For instance the book says, bush mulch is a necessity, mostly eucalypt mulch. For a start I had this laid on when I lived at Maiden Gully, but my supply dwindled when I shifted to Kangaroo Flat. I had to try a substitute. I tried a mulch that was mostly ash autumn leaves.
The mixture was successful, the basal leaves came up in time and the plants flowered well.
Again, the book says, clean creek gravel, no clay, thus this sometimes necessitated washing. This ingredient proved hard to get and often needed long trips or wheels, so a substitute was sought and was forthcoming in washed quartz. We found the ideal material at the White Hills quartz crushes. It required no washing, there being no clay in clean quartz. This material was tried and proved a real success, the quartz proved an ideal draining medium, as it was for this purpose that the sand was included in the basic mix.
As years wore on and ninety-two was looming ahead, and owing to poor eyesight my wheels were no more, it became more difficult to gather material for the basic mix.
I had ideas of giving up growing the orchids.
This idea grew stronger as the crushed quartz became almost impossible to obtain. However, on a last trip to get supplies with the help of my son and his vehicle, we discovered at a garden place in Calder Highway that had a sample of gravel that looked a bit like what we wanted, so I took a punt on it. The gravel had to be washed to rid it of clay, and the stones were much too big to be ideal. However I put it in, in the right proportion and trusted to luck.
And by the beginning of April, up came the basal leaves, showing good promise, so off we go again.
Barbara, we will have some orchids for this year's Flora Show.

P.S. By the way for someone who may like to try to grow our ground orchids, the Title of the book mentioned is:
Cultivating Australian Native Orchids. Produced by the Australian Native Orchid Group
Address: Secretary ANOG, PO Box 285
Cheltenham Vic. 3192.

The Whole Bush was Like a Garden – Aboriginal Plant Use and Land Management
Speaker: Beth Gott

Author: Sabine Wilkens

What is Australia's biodiversity? I know of one case where scientists and land managers were asked to regenerate an area as close as possible to 'its original state'. Some people define Australia's original biodiversity as the collection of those plants and animals that were here before Europeans arrived. What people tend to forget is that this biodiversity encountered by europeans was the product of an interaction with aboriginal society for thousands of years.

Aboriginals managed the land to allow their survival. When europeans first arrived they found a healthy and well-nourished people, not people living at the edge of starvation. Old reports state that in three or four hours a family could procure as much food as needed for the day and that without showing any fatigue or hardship from doing so (John Eyre 1845).

It is often said that aboriginals lived in harmony with their environment, that they did not upset the balance of nature, and that this balance was only upset when europeans arrived – but this is not true. Aboriginals actively intervened in nature for their aim but they did it with the collective knowledge of thousands of generations. As Koori people have been in Victoria for at least 40 000 years such practices must have been sustainable and resources must have been used that renewed themselves.

To encourage the types of plants that were valuable, aboriginals modified their environment in several ways.
They regularly burnt the forest to allow light to enter the forest floor, an essential condition for the survival of small herbaceous plants. Not only the forest was burnt though. Aboriginals also restricted the tussock grasses from taken over large areas of plain country by burning them. This burning was done in sections in a controlled manner. Being able to do this required a great deal of knowledge about plants, fire and their behaviours. This is reflected in the high status of the men who were involved in firing the bush. In some areas the right to fire the bush was passed down only in certain families.

When a bushfire happens to burn at the right time and place, the effect is striking. Although devastating to life and property, the Ash Wednesday fires occurred at about the time when Koories would have burnt the bush. At Anglesea the forest floor was covered with small food plants after the fire, a sight not seen by many europeans. In late summer/autumn, these plants are in a dormant stage and are not vulnerable to fire (this is mostly a completely different story when fire comes through at a time the plant are actively growing....) At Anglesea, two to three years after the fire, the forest floor began to close over with the woody vegetation, restricting access to light, nutrients and water for small plants there. It is likely that a firing cycle of about three years was normal for many areas in south-eastern Australia.

But firing was not the only modification to the environment. The digging for roots and tubers continuously loosened, aerated and softened the soil. In this manner ash and leaf litter were also incorporated. By digging in a patch of plants, the remaining plants (some were always left in a patch) were given room to spread out.
Trading with tubers and other plants also went on, helping the spread of some cultivars to areas previously uncolonised. Bendigo is on the eastern edge of the DjaDja Wrung territory which may have been conducive for trading with other groups that lived nearby.

So, in effect the whole bush was treated like a garden and the fertilising, ground preparation, thinning sowing, planting and spreading of cultivars was not all that different from other forms of gardening or agriculture

Plants make up more than 50% of the Koori diet and in this region, underground storage organs constituted the staple diet items. These storage organs mostly came from small plants that are growing in the herbaceous layer, especially those from the lily and orchid family. Even small lilies often have extensive underground tubers that allow the plants to survive from one season to the next. Once grazing began, these herbaceous ground plants disappeared almost completely.
Beth Gott showed us slides of the sometimes surprising underground organs of many plants

in these groups, chocolate lily, vanilla lily, bulbine lily, milkmaids, blue grass lily, hypoxis, twining fringe lily, early nancy, milkmaids, hyacinth orchids, leopard orchid, potato orchid (cinnamon bells), nodding greenhood, leek orchids and other small ground orchids.

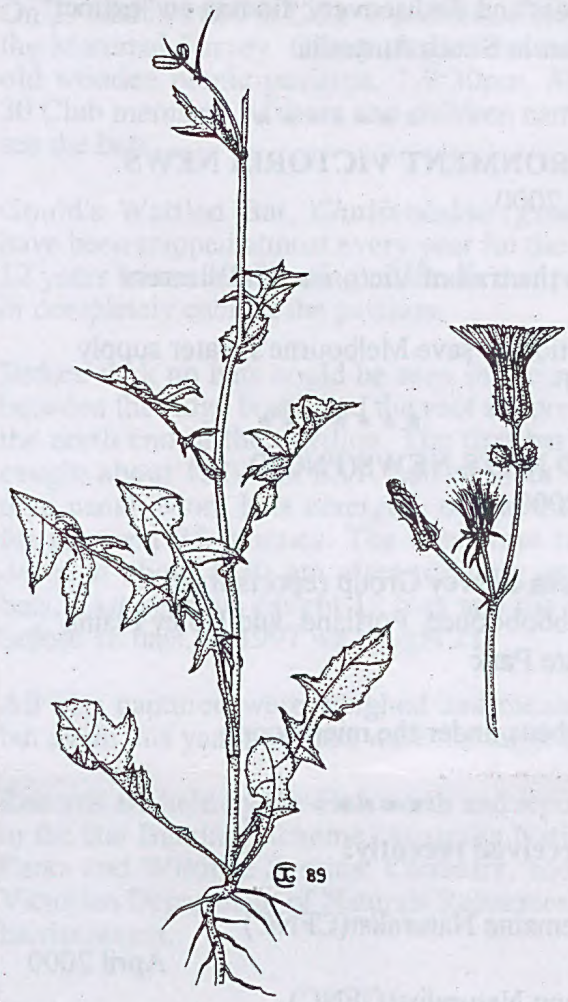
The tubers from these groups of plants were soft and could be eaten raw, however they were usually cooked. The underground parts of other plants had to be prepared in special ways to make them edible, e.g. those of bracken fern, roots of native geraniums, small leaved clematis, showy podolepis and the murnong (Yam Daisy). Murnong in particular was once said to carpet the forest floor in many parts of Victoria, but they also disappeared very fast once grazing and settlement began. Apparently only five years after settlement of Melbourne, murnong had disappeared in the area. Cattle ate the leaves and dug up the tubers.
Some aquatic plants (marsh club rush, water ribbons, common reed, cumbungi) needed very complicated preparation but they were usually also used for other purposes like string, spears and necklaces.

While roots and tubers were available nearly all year round, some fruits were seasonal only. For example those of the Cherry Ballart, the Dillon Bush, quandongs, mistletoe berries, native raspberry and several species of kangaroo apple.
In Victoria, few seeds were eaten, this was a practice in more arid country. One that was eaten, was the seed of the native flax. Surprisingly, there is no record of wattle seeds being eaten in Victoria.
Other uses of plants were for sweets (soaked banksia cones, lerp), fibre (flax lily, mat rush), medicines (eucalypt gum, mint, sneeze weed) and glues (grass tree resin).

Many members and visitors had come to hear Beth Gott, the meeting room was full to capacity. This is obviously a topic close to many people's hearts. I am certain nobody was disappointed. I purchased a copy of Dr Gott's book which was apparently produced for Schools. It has excellent black and white drawings (see example below) of many plants mentioned on the night. If anybody is interested to have a look at it, I would be happy to make it available.

There was a very far-reaching message in Beth Gott's concluding words...there is a lot of knowledge around and a lot of plants that are already adapted to the local conditions. The challenge is – making a good living out of this land for another 40 000 years.

P.S. Most of us were surprised when we heard of the many uses of sowthistle (or milkthistle *Sonchus oleraceus*). This plant which features in all the weed books I have come across, might have been brought over by white settlers as well but there are so many records of Koori use that it is likely the plant was here already.This raises the interesting prospect of changing our perception of this plant.



TULLARK (Tjapwurong, Gunditjmara); DALURP (Coranderrk). Sow Thistle, *Sonchus oleraceus*
There are numerous records of the Koories eating the young leaves and juicy stems. Around the Barmah forest the peeled stems were called 'BUCKABUN'.

From the Mailbag
Author: Elaine Mathison

Each month the club receives a number of newsletters and magazines: some by subscription and some in exchange for Whirrakee. These are available from the club library.

* * * * * * *

NATURAL HERITAGE(Nat. Heritage Trust)
Summer 2000

- Planting the Sustainability Seed: transforming a farm on the Yorke Peninsula in South Australia.
- Grassland Rediscovery: finding an "extinct" plant in South Australia.

* * * * * * *

ENVIRONMENT VICTORIA NEWS
March 2000

- On the trail of Victorian land clearers
- Action to save Melbourne's water supply

* * * * * * *

FIELD NATS NEWS(FNCV)
April 2000

- Fauna Survey Group reports from Cobboboonee, Portland, and Holey Plains State Park
- Lichens under the microscope

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Also received recently:

*Castlemaine Naturalist(CFNC)
April 2000
*Geelong Naturalist(GFNC)
March & April 2000
*Sun-Nat (Sunraysia FNC)
March-April 2000
*Newsletter (Maryborough FNC)

* * * * * * *

The mailbox was rather empty this month!

Tiritiri Matangi: an open sanctuary
Author: Elaine Mathison

New Zealand's island sanctuaries help to ensure the survival of many rare and endangered plant and animal species. They are especially valuable because they are easier to keep free of predators than mainland areas.

Tiritiri Matangi ("looking to the wind or wind tossing about") lies 4km off the coast of Whangaparaoa Peninsula, north of Auckland. It is easily accessible by ferry from both the peninsula and Auckland. I was fortunate to visit on a perfect spring day with clear skies, warm sunshine and just a light breeze.

The 220 hectare island was originally covered with a mixed pohutukawa forest, with denser forest in the sheltered valleys. However, by 1900 centuries of Maori occupation followed by European farming had turned most of Tititiri into rolling grassland, with only a few pockets of forest remaining.

Tiritiri has been replanted with native trees, both to speed up the natural regeneration of the coastal forest, and to provide a rich and varied habitat for bird species.

The island's original birdlife suffered greatly when the forests were cleared for pasture. Many species were forced to find new homes and food sources, and only the more adaptable remained, such as the tui, fantail, silvereye, grey warbler, bellbird and spotless crake.

Some rarer birds - the saddleback, takahe, parakeet, North Island robin, kokaho, whitehead, little spotted kiwi and brown teal - have been introduced. As the habitat increases, there will be releases of fernbird and tomtit.

Our tour group saw several of the above species during our most enjoyable day on the island. The walk took us firstly along the rocky coastline, past the penguin boxes - when present the birds can be seen by lifting the lids. Up then through a forested gully to the open ridge track leading to the lighthouse, thus giving us a sample of the delights offered by Tiritiri Matangi Island.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY PUBLIC LECTURE

The Value of Retaining Native Vegetation will be the topic of the World Environment Day Public Lecture. Ern Perkins OAM will present information on value and care of remnant vegetation. He will suggest how the community can be effective in retaining and enhancing significant areas on roadsides, streams, and private property.

World Environment Day has been designated by the United Nations to focus attention on positive programs for protecting and restoring the world's Natural Heritage. Each year the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc. organizes a Public Lecture on a theme appropriate to the objectives of World Environment Day.

This year the speaker will be Ern Perkins OAM. Mr. Perkins is a Foundation member and past President of the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club. He has belonged to many other Field Naturalists Clubs, the Western Victoria Field Naturalists Club, and for 35 years has been a member of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria. He is the Past-President and current Secretary of the Bendigo Native Plant Group. In the Castlemaine area, Ern Perkins has served on many local government committees concerned with conservation.

On Australia Day 2000, Ern Perkins was awarded the Order of Australia medal (OAM) for Service to Conservation and the Environment, particularly through the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club and the Community of Castlemaine.

The World Environment Day Public Lecture will be on Friday 2 June 2000 at 7:30 pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Hall, Old View Street, Golden Square. The hall is on Old High Street, next to the Fire Station in Golden Square. Supper will be served after the lecture.

- Further information from Dr. Bill Holsworth, Phone 5443 4063, Fax 5443 6763 and E-mail wholsworth@bigpond.com.au.

BAT TRAPPING REPORT-

Author: Bill Holsworth

On 29 March 2000 at Lake Weeroona, Bendigo, the Mammal Survey Group trapped bats at the old wooden picnic pavilion, 7-9:30pm. About 30 Club members, visitors and children came to see the bats.

Gould's Wattled Bat, *Chalinolubus gouldii,* have been trapped almost every year for the past 12 years (since 1989) using mist nets that partly or completely enclose the pavilion.

Before dark no bats could be seen in the space between the ridge board and the roof supports at the north end of the pavilion. The first bat was caught about 1920 hrs EST, half an hour later than usual. More bats emerged, one at a time, for the next 25 minutes. The nets were taken down at about 8:30 pm after trapping only 5 bats. Last year we caught 12 bats and the year before 18 bats. In 1997 we caught 21.

All bats captured were weighed and measured but again this year new bats were not tagged.

Records are held by Dr. Holsworth and reported to the Bat Banding Scheme, Australia National Parks and Wildlife Service, Canberra, and the Victorian Department of Naturals Resources and Environment.

Bird-Atlassing Outings in the Bendigo Area: March – December 2000

Outings are on the first Sunday of each month. Most outings will be half day, but bringing some morning tea/lunch would be advisable. Meet at the Senior Citizens Centre, Old High Street Golden Square at 9am unless otherwise advised.
Please contact Anne Bridley (ph. 54 494379) or Bev Culvenor (ph. 54 421983) if attending.

May 7–	Crosbie State Forest.
June 4–	Myers Creek between Sebastian and Raywood.
July 2–	Huntley area - Wellsford State Forest.
August 6–	Sedgwick State Forest/Swift Parrot Survey.
September 3–	Bullock Creek/East Loddon Area
October 1–	Loddon River/Serpentine Area.
November (date to tbe confirmed)–	Tang Tang Wildlife Reserve.
December 3–	Marong State Forest.

Threatened Bird Network, Volunteer Activities
Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot Searches.

Weekends of May 27/28 and August 5/6
Contact: Simon Kennedy, phone 5430 4357.

Grey-crowned Babbler Tree Planting at Violet Town and Euroa in July - August
Contact: Birds Australia, phone 98822622

For other activities with threatened birds contact Birds Australia or consult the Club's copy of *Volunteer*, newsletter of the threatened bird network.

A Burning Issue: Woodland Protection and Firewood

A two-day conference at LaTrobe University, Bendigo, June 8 and 9.

Advance Notice! The Woodlands Department of the Victorian National Parks Association is keen to bring to your attention a conference which they are organising (with an increasing number of local organisations) on the burning issue of:

WOODLAND PROTECTION AND FIREWOOD.
KEEPING BOTH.

National Conference
La Trobe University, Bendigo,
June 8 and 9

This conference is for environmentalists and community organisations, professional and hobby farmers, agroforestry experts, the industrial firewood and home heating industries, governments, catchment management authorities and environment professionals....and YOU!

As you would know, up to 1.5 million tonnes of firewood is consumed each year and most of this comes from our endangered woodlands: the quintessential Australian forest and the honeypot for our wintering birds. Our woodlands can't survive this treatment; we've already lost 85% of the Box Ironbark.

There is a solution. It's already underway, but needs to happen much faster: grow the firewood on already cleared farmland. It gives the farmer a cash crop, reduces salinity and soil loss, and can provide healthy habitat if done well.

The conference will foster discussion around these problems, and the solutions, including the VNPA's Firewood Business Plan and practical examples of plantation firewood from NSW, Victoria, and the ACT. An afternoon field trip and conference dinner are included.

Further information will be available in March. If you can volunteer some time, have some ideas, suggest some places to advertise or just want to register interest contact Karen Alexander (tel/fax 03 59684651 or Jason Doyle (VNPA, tel 03 96508296, fax 96546843).
There will be a cost but good concessions will be available for voluntary community organisations.

Birds and Words (Part 2)
Author: Peter Allan

A cheery thought on sneaky species.

Do you know the crakes that creep in the creek?
Or does nobody know them but me.
They're just like the great big waterhens,
But tiny as tiny can be.
There's the Spotted Crake and the Spotless Crake
And the Little Crake - that's three.
But you've got to keep-oo-ever so still
If a Crake you want to see.
('Tales and Tarradiddles', Prof. Harrison, quoted from *The Bird Observer*, Feb 1957)

Like a certain State Department the Little Crake's name changes frequently—'Little' to 'Marsh' to 'Baillons'. Talking of names—what a lot of paper, what taxonomic battles, what disputes in the bush have been spent in our desire for order in all things and names acceptable to all. We inherited in common names those familiar to our mainly British ancestors. So we have Wrens that are not Wrens, Robins that are not Thrush-type Robins, a Wagtail that's a Fantail (side to side, not up and down), Magpies, Choughs etc., and hyphenated impossibilities.

Our Cuckoo-Shrike is neither Cuckoo nor Shrike, Shrike-Tit neither Tit nor Shrike (by the way, The Shrike-Tit's Latin name is *'Falcunculus'*, ie, 'Little Falcon'. Oops!). Magpie-Lark is a Flycatcher with a fondness for mud. Golden-headed Fantail-Warbler—a name as long as the bird? Cuckoo-Shrike's Latin name is *'Coracina'* - 'like a crow'. Oops again!

Not that the older names are more accurate. The Nightjar - a thing that makes a jarring noise at night. In French, *'Engoulevent'* - 'the swallower', like our Frogmouth - so far, so good. But *'Ziegenmelker'* (German) and *'Caprimulgus'* (Latin) mean 'Goat-sucker'. Mr Aristotle (ancient Greek Philosopher) assured us that this bird flies to the goat, sucks the udder dry which withers and the goats go blind.
The world-wide species, Osprey *Pandion haliaetus.* More confusion. Osprey comes from 'Ossifrage' ie, 'bone-breaker', but this was the Bearded Vulture's specialty, dropping bones to break them open. The Roman General and Naturalist, Pliny, said that one killed the Greek dramatist Aeschylus by dropping a tortoise on his bald head in mistake for a rock. Hats on! And the Latin second part comes from *Hals* – Sea, *Aetos* – Eagle. Pandion was a mythical king turned into the Osprey who, surprisingly, had as children, Progne the Swallow and Philomela the Nightingale. Caspian Terns were once *Hydroprogne* – Sea Swallows and, in the old ABC Argonauts Club I was Pandion 15. (RAOU Official Checklist, 1926, now out of date but has interesting detail on names and sources)

Whilst we are mythologising let us consider the Phoenix, the rarest bird originally from Egypt, only one in the species which every 500 years sets fire to its nest, perishes, then arises from the ashes. Used as a symbol for Christ's resurrection in Medieval Europe, and by the ABC for an equally mythical fire-bombing investigation TV series.

Then there is the Roc, confirmed by Marco Polo (and Sinbad the Sailor) a large Persian species which could snatch up elephants, carry them on high and ... more dropping on rocks (or bald heads?).

More recently, Samuel Johnson (1709 - 84) stated "Swallows certainly sleep all Winter. A number of them conglobulate together by flying round and round then all in a heap throw themselves to lie in the bed of a river." More recently, still in the 1950s/1960s when the bulldozer really made its mark for clearing bush blocks, we were told that displaced species "retreated to the forests". Well, I suppose the survivors did initially, but any habitat only holds so many individuals.

Drifting back to names. Perhaps we should have used more Aboriginal names as has been done with marsupials. I can think of only five. Forget Emu and Jabiru—they are from Portugal and Brazil. Only one appears in Latin, I think, ie, *Falco berigora.* The Budgerygah comes in a different spelling (once Betcherrygah) claimed to be from two Aboriginal words, Budgeree - Good, and Gar - Cockatoo. An American dictionary in 1880 gave the source of the name as a corruption of the French Beauregard – Good looks – an error repeated in subsequent editions (Brasch, R. 'The Cat's Pyjamas', A&R)

Today I spotted a Spotted Spotted in a tree. The Spotted Pardalote *(Pardalotus punctatus)* i.e., double tautology, *Pardalotus* – Greek, meaning Spotted and *Punctatus* – Latin, meaning Spotted!

We give birds character as well as names, particularly those with whom we have a long-standing or close association. Affectionate - Willie Wagtail, Jacky Winter, Jenny Wren, Robin Redbreast (note, they all get 'human' Christian names) or more aggressive - Sparrowhawk, Chickenhawk, Goshawk, Bee-eater - Magpie and Jackdaw are early examples (Margaret and Jack) of familiarity naming and Martin has no apparent source other than as a simple name.

The Swan, particularly the Mute, is associated with Royalty. Princes and Princesses are changed into them with often tragic motifs, eg, The Swan Lake Ballet.

The silver swan, who living had no note
When death approached, unlocked her silent throat.
Leaning her breast against the reedy shore
Thus sang her first and last, and sung no more.
Farewell all joys! Oh death come close my eyes.
More geese than swans now live, more fools than wise.
(Anon, *Golden Treasury of Animal Stories and Poems*, Untermeyer, L.(Ed.))

So geese have a different character, more homely sometimes foolish but also motherly (Mother Goose). Contrariwise, their very obvious migrations in the Northern Hemisphere give them an air of mystery - the restless wild goose, the wanderer. "I must go where the wild goose goes."

Chickens, or rather hens, are very homely, domestics busy: "The Little Red Hen sometimes easily upset. The sky is falling in." Roosters are all bluff and bluster as in Aesops Fables - no sober father figure here.

Ducks are simply funny. Why else are major cartoonists' characters noisy ducks? Donald, Daisy and the suspect nephews from Disney, the despicable Daffy from Warners. It's those flat feet and ridiculous voice "Quack"!

Ravens/Crows are perhaps the commonest birds in legend and literature, from Odin (Norse) with one at each ear, Noah sending forth a Raven first (It did not return! Why then so many Ravens?). Irish Cuchlain, two magic ones. Owen of Wales with a whole Raving army. Indians of North America, Raven masks (trickster, changes shape, seduces women etc.), Australian Crows - 'Crow Country' by Kenneth Slessor, "Lashed by the screaming of the crow", to a team of netballers - the Adelaide Ravens. And Cormorants are Ravens of the Sea (Cor - Marine).

Enough is enough! A gem of a poem, six lines from Victorian poet, Lord Tennyson, 'The Eagle':

He clasps the crag with crooked hands
Close to the sun in lonely lands.
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls.
He watches from his mountain walls
And like a thunderbolt he falls.
(Anon, *Golden Treasury of Animal Stories and Poems*, Untermeyer, L.(Ed.))

And a final word on the environment from General Pliny (AD 23-79) - regrettably, little changes in some ways:

"It is true that the earth brought forth poisons but who discovered them except man ... It is not unusual for us to poison rivers and the very elements of which the world is made, even the air itself in which all things live we corrupt till it injures and destroys."

References: I have collected quotes over many years - not all sources have been noted.

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continued from the front cover:
.....The sexes are similar except when they are talking. The female has a loud raucous quack, repeated four to six times while the male has a soft hiss, a courtship 'peep' and a low-pitched soft, drawn out quack, also uttered in courtship. So, now you know how to tell them apart!

Creswick Landcare Centre
Landcare Victoria
Natural Resources and Environment

Riparian Zone and Remnant Vegetation Management Workshops

With the sponsorship of North Central Catchment Management Authority, Creswick LandCare Centre is pleased to include a number of workshops in its Landcare Workshops Series which look at innovative and challenging management techniques for the riparian zone and remnant vegetation.

Each of the interactive workshops will be on-site and presented by a number of leading experts in their field. Greg Peters, NCCMA Waterways Manager, will lead the series on the riparian zone while the series on remnant vegetation is to be lead by Geoff Park, Bushcare and Biodiversity Manager with NCCMA.

I hope you are able to take advantage of the excellent opportunities these workshops offer to improve your knowledge and skills in the latest research and approaches to the management of the important environments.

Further information can be obtained from Gayl Morrow, Landcare Workshops Coordinator. Ph 53452200.
Email: landcare.centre@nre.vic.gov.au

This letter was sent to the Club recently. Unfortunately the first workshop in Series One – The Riparian Zone *has already been held in April.*
I hope this isn't the only one you were interested in (ed.)

Workshop Registration Form

Cost of each workshop is $30 / $15 concession.
Please send registration form and payment to:

Creswick Landcare Centre
PO Box 3
Creswick, VIC 3363

Please register me for the following workshops:

SERIES ONE - THE RIPARIAN ZONE

- ❑ $ Cattle & Creeks, Sheep & Streams - how do we keep the balance
- ❑ $ The Riparian Zone - more than just trees
- ❑ $ Life Under the Surface

SERIES TWO - REMNANT VEGETATION

- ❑ $ Remnants - looking after what we've got
- ❑ $ Vegetation Mapping - what goes where
- ❑ $ Monitoring - keeping tabs on your trees

Total registration payable $ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____

The cost for each workshop is $30 / $15 concession. Light refreshments, notes and transport are provided. Details of site locations will be made available upon registration for workshop.

Friday 7 April 9.30am - 1pm

Cattle & Creeks, Sheep & Streams - how do we keep the balance?

Location: Daylesford area and Kangaroo Creek

Look at new and innovative approaches to fencing, watering and stock management for protecting the riparian zone. Greg Peters, Waterways Manager with NCCMA, Mt Lofty Ranges Landcare Group (SA) members, and a fencing material company representative will focus on the advantages, disadvantages, practicalities and costs.

Friday 12 May 9.30am - 1pm

The Riparian Zone - more than just trees

Location: Daylesford area and Kangaroo Creek

Site preparation, weed management, plant spacings and diversity are essential to successful to streamside planting. Greg Peters, Matt Kennedy (NCCMA Works Coordinator) and landholders will discuss and demonstrate current examples, new directions and the lessons to be learned from experience.

Friday 12 June 9.30am - 1pm

Life Under the Surface

Location: Daylesford area and Kangaroo Creek

This workshop completes the story of good riparian zone management - improving the in-stream habitat! Greg Peters with Bill O'Connor, NRE, and a local fisher will present the practical aspects of bringing back in-stream diversity by presenting an overview of current works, the role of large woody debris and rock placement.

Friday 11 August 9.30am - 1pm

Remnants - looking after what we've got

Location: Creswick area

Geoff Park, Bushcare Manager, NCCMA, and Elvyne Hogan, Trust for Nature, will introduce the range of issues confronting landholders in the management of remnant vegetation. Issues covered include what constitutes remnant vegetation, assessing conservation values and the condition of remnant bushland, how to enhance habitat and manage threatening processes such as weed invasion, grazing & fire.

Friday 8 September 9.30am - 1pm

Vegetation Mapping - what goes where

Location: Sandon area

This workshop introduces new vegetation mapping & analysis techniques. Geoff Park & Annette Muir (NRE botanist who completed EVC mapping for Box-Ironbark region) explain methods to determine original vegetation communities present at a site. Learn how to read the landscape, how to recognise these plant communities and how to apply this understanding to management & establishment of native vegetation.

Friday 13 October 9.30am - 1pm

Monitoring - Keeping Tabs on Your Trees

Location: Lexton area

Geoff Park and Paul Ryan will present techniques for the effective monitoring of remnant vegetation and vegetation establishment projects, eg photopoint monitoring, remnant vegetation assessment and flora/fauna monitoring including bird survey techniques. They will demonstrate the use of GPS and GIS technology to record/analyse results and how to use results to inform management decisions.

WORKSHOPS ARE SPONSORED BY

NORTH CENTRAL CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
in association with

CRESWICK LANDCARE CENTRE.

Landcare Centre Creswick

Natural Resources and Environment

AGRICULTURE
RESOURCES
CONSERVATION
LAND MANAGEMENT

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Speaker Syllabus for General Meetings – Second Wednesday 7:30 pm

Date – 2000	Topic	Speaker
10 May	**Mushrooms and Fungi**	**Robert Seviour** Dept of Biological Sciences LaTrobe University, Bendigo, P.O. Box 199, Bendigo, 3552
2 June	**Special Speaker for World Environment Day**	**Ern Perkins OAM** Field Naturalist Extraordinaire, see p 8
14 June	**Environmental Law**	**Barry Phillips** School of Management, Technology and Environment, LaTrobe University, Bendigo, P.O. Box 199, Bendigo 3552
12 July	**Hollow Formation in Box-Ironbark forests**	**Les Vearing** Forester in Charge, Bendigo Forest Management Area, Dept of Natural Resources and Environment, Box 3100, Bendigo Mail Centre 3554
9 August	**Fallen Timber and Fauna Habitat**	**Lawrie Conole** 3 Gezireh Street, Pascoe Vale South Victoria 3044
13 September	**President's Address at Annual General Meeting**	**Rodney Orr**
11 October	**Soils of Bendigo**	**Nathalie Baxter** Land Evaluation Officer Centre foe Land Protection P.O. Box 3100, Bendigo Mail Centre. 3554
8 November		To be announced
13 December	**Christmas Dinner**	No speaker this month

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Mammal Survey Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meeting

Wednesday, May 10, 7:30
Dr Robert Seviour from the Division of Biological Sciences LaTrobe University, Bendigo will talk about 'Mushrooms and Fungi'.
Note: This speaker has been swapped with Barry Phillips who will talk at the June general meeting

Friday, June 2, 7:30
World Environment Day – **Special Lecture**
Speaker Ern Perkins OAM
Topic: The Value of Retaining Native Vegetation

Wednesday 14 June, 7:30
Barry Phillips (School of Management, Technology and Environment will be talking about 'Environmental Law'.

Bird Observers Group

May 7–	Crosbie State Forest.
June 4–	Myers Creek between Sebastian and Raywood.
July 2–	Huntley area - Wellsford State Forest.

Atlassing Excursions are conducted on the first Sunday of every month. See page 9 for the year's program.
Meet 9am at the Clubroom, this is a half-day excursion.
Please contact Anne Bridley (ph. 54 493479) or Bev Culvenor (ph. 54 421983) if attending.

Garden Working Bees

The next two Garden Working Bees will be held on **Sunday 21st May**, 9am
and **Sunday 25th June**, 9am.
All welcome and encouraged to attend.

Supper
The usual arrangements for supper are as follows: members either bring a plate or pay $1 for supper. This small amount is used to reimburse members who purchase essential supper supplies.

Other Events

Woodland Protection and Firewood. Keeping Both
June 8 and 9, La Trobe University, Bendigo
see page 8 for details.

Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot Searches.
Weekends of May 27/28 and August 5/6.
See page 9 for details.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.
W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals. It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Natural Resources and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433